The White House Stables and Garages

HERBERT R. COLLINS

We read little about the White House stables, yet many incidents of interest have occurred relating to the horses and carriages of the Presidents as well as in relation to coachmen and grooms." So wrote Gilson Willets in his book, *Inside History of the White House*, published in 1908.[1]

Previous to the erection of the President's House in Washington, D.C., Presidents Washington and Adams maintained stables at their residences in New York and Philadelphia. In a letter to her daughter, November 25, 1800, Mrs. John Adams mentioned the stable as having been at the Executive Mansion in Washington. At that time, the President's horses were housed in a stable located in the square bounded by F and G and 13th and 14th Streets.[2]

In announcing for bids on the contract for the construction of this stable, the Commissioner's Office released the following notice on May 20, 1800:

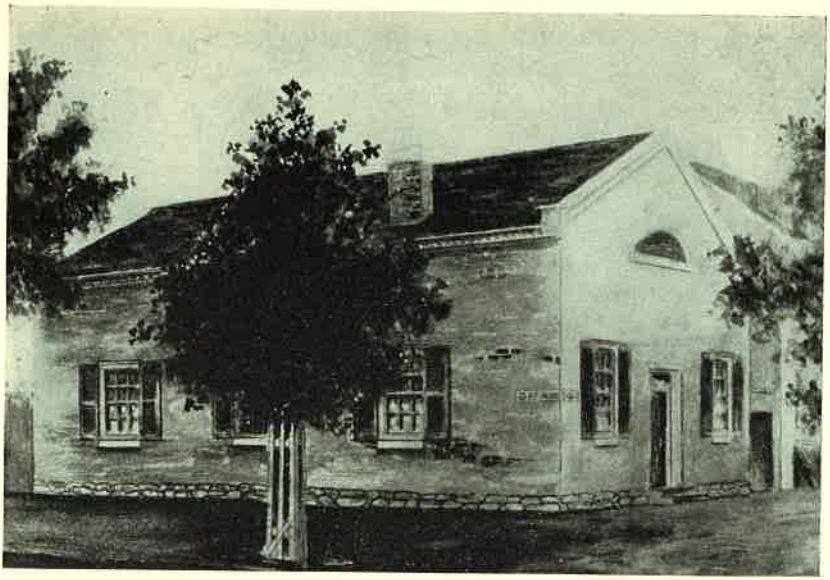
> Proposals will be received at the Commissioner's office until Second Day of June next for building a brick Stable (to contain Stalls for 12 Horses, Carriage House to contain three Carriages, and a small Room for Grain, as by the Plan and Elevation lodged with the Subscriber, will appear—any person disposed to contract, will file in written Proposals and name his Surety—One half of the price agreed upon will be paid on Signing the Contract, and the other half on the completion of the Building.
>
> Per Order
> Thomas Munroe, Clk. Comm.[3]

Proposals were returned to the Commissioner's Office on June 2 and 3, 1800 by the following individuals: Andrew McDonald, James

[1] Gilson Willets, *Inside History of the White House*. New York: The Christian Herald, 1908, p. 429.

[2] Wilhelmus Bogart Bryan, *A History of the National Capital*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914, Vol. 1, p. 459.

[3] NCRE Microscopy M371, Roll 2. Record Group 42—"Commissioner of Public Buildings of D. C. Proceedings," vols. 5, 6, 7 & 8—Oct. 1, 1798–Mar. 14, 1851, p. 350. The National Archives.



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First White House Stable

The 1800 White House stable at Fourteenth and G Streets, N. W., after it had been remodeled for use as a school. It was later demolished.

Library of Congress

White House Stable as rebuilt after the 1864 fire

This illustration appeared in Harper's Weekly in 1869 and shows horses and ponies in President Grant's stable. This stable was demolished in 1871 to make room for the Executive Office Building.

Clarke, William Lovell, Wilson Bryan, Allen Wiley, Anthony Jones and George Andrews.[4] The commission to build the stables was granted to Lovell and was recorded on June 4 as follows:

> It is this day agreed between Wm Lovell & Hugh Hensley of the one part, and the Commissioners of the federal Buildings, as followeth: The said William Lovell agrees to build on lot numbered fourteen in Square numbered 453, a stable, agreeably to the Plan and Bill of Particulars hereto annexed to do the work thereof in a good, Strong, neat and workmanlike manner, to procure good hard place Brick for the whole of the said Brick walls; also, good Scantling and Plank to Suffer said Materials & Workmanship to be at all times inspected by the Superintendent of the public Buildings for the time being, and to use no materials or do any work on said Buildings, contrary to the Directions of the said Superintendent, and to furnish and complete said Building on or before the first day of October next.
>
> The full quantity of Materials specified in the said Bill of Particulars is to be used about said Building.
>
> The said Commissioners on this part, agree to pay to the William Lovell for said Building, the Sum of Sixteen hundred Dollars, the third thereof at the time of executing this Contract, one third when the walls are up, and to pay him the remainder on the delivery of the Keys to the Building.
>
> In witness whereof, the parties have hereunto set their hands and affixed their Seals, this fourth Day of June 1800.
>
> Signed, Sealed & Delivered in the presence of
> James Hoban
> Wm Brent
> Wm Lovell
> Hugh Densley
> Gusts. Scott

Commissioner Alexander White objected to the site of lot 14 in square numbered 453 and another site containing lot 14 in square numbered 253 was chosen in its stead. The site first chosen would have fallen between 6th and 7th, and I and H Streets, N.W., according to Ellicott's map of Washington. Commissioner White substantiated his argument on the grounds that the location was too distant from the White House and that its location would "violate the trust reposed in the President of the United States by the original Proprietors of the City, & by Congress, with regard to the disposal of City property Because a Stable will be disagreeable and injurious to the owners of

[4] Ibid, pp. 347, 359, 360.

Public Buildings Service Photograph in the National Archives

Demolition of White House Stable, 1871

This photograph, dated July 10, 1871, shows the digging of the foundation for the Executive Office Building and the demolition of the stable which was built after the 1864 fire.

National Park Service Photograph

White House Stable Built during President Grant's Administration

This stable, built in 1871, was remodeled during President Harrison's administration, and demolished during President Taft's administration. It was located opposite the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

lots in its vicinity"—in short, it would curtail the sale and lessen the value of the adjoining lots in square numbered 453.[5]

The stable was completed by August 11, 1800, at a cost of $1600, and it was used for the Executive Mansion until President Jefferson made other provisions.[6] In 1821, President Monroe permitted the abandoned stable building to be remodelled and used as a Lancastrian school with a Mr. S. John Thomson as teacher. In 1870, the building was sold to a Mr. Douglass at the price of $5,000, and was next used as a carpenter's shop. Former pupils of the Lancastrian school and souvenir hunters mutilated the building, and, by 1886, it was uninhabitable. J. H. Small, a local florist, erected a larger building on the site. The Federal-American Bank occupied the new building in 1913, and in 1924 another structure was built by the same banking concern.[7]

In 1806, President Jefferson added a stable and cowshed on the Treasury side of the White House grounds at the same time that he built a bower-like, one-story structure on the opposite side of the White House for offices. In this way, the stable structure served to balance the office wing, which was composed of a series of buildings in connected form, and which included a meat house, wine cellar, coal and wood sheds, and privies as well as an office. The carriage house was built near the stable in 1809. The foundations of these structures were unearthed by workmen during the Theodore Roosevelt renovation of the White House.[8] During the Madison Administration, Benjamin F. Latrobe directed the building of new coachhouses as an addition to the existing stable.[9]

After the fire of 1814, Colonel Samuel Lane, Commissioner for Public Buildings, made an estimate for "extending the Colonnade Building West of the President's House 60 feet to admit of accommodation to that house of Stables, Carriage house, Granary, etc." The estimate was $8,229.06 and was made and presented to James Hoban. To this, Hoban added another estimate for "securing the improvements and grounds north of the President's House, from injury by

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[5] Ibid, pp. 363–365.

[6] Ibid, p. 411.

[7] French Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, legend on photograph. Constance McLaughlin Green, *Washington Village and Capital, 1800–1878*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962.

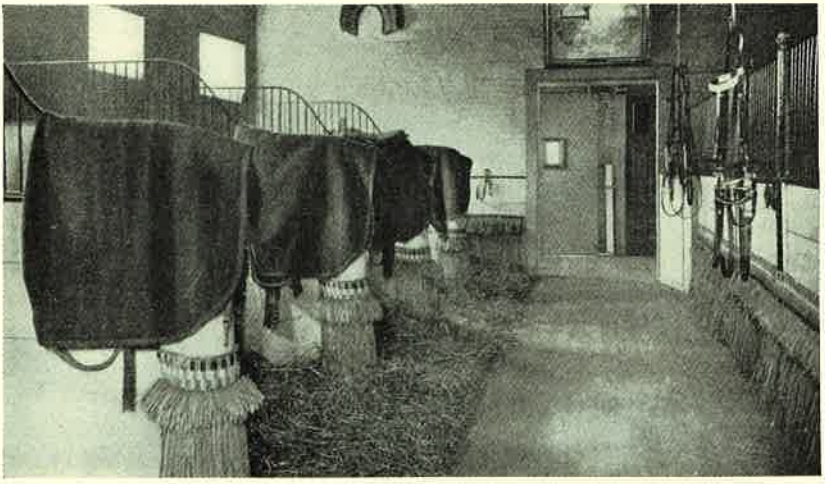
[8] Charles Hurd, *The White House*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940, p. 34. Chalmers M. Roberts, *Washington, Past and Present*. Public Affairs Press 1950, p. 54. Wilhemus Bogart Bryan, *A History of the National Capital*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914, Vol. 1, p. 459.

[9] Benjamin Latrobe Papers, Cornell University Library.

National Park Service Photograph

White House Stable Remodeled during President Harrison's Administration

This stable, built in 1871, was remodeled during President Harrison's administration, and demolished during President Taft's administration. It was located opposite the Corcoran Gallery of Art.



Smithsonian Instituion

Interior of White House Stable about 1903

This is an interior view of the stable built in 1871.

carriages, Horses etc. by means of a Post and Chain fence." The 1300 feet necessary amounted to $1,040.00.[10]

In 1819, Daniel Gantt was paid two hundred dollars on his account for digging the foundation of the President's stable. He was also paid in four installments for digging the foundation for the office to the President's House.[11]

This stable and carriage house was described in Charles Bulfinch's report to Congressman Stephan Van Rensselaer, in which he states:

> I find that the carriage house is conveniently situated at the end, about 20 feet square. The stable for eight horses accomodates the number now kept by the family; it is airy and well ventilated . . . The west wing is divided in the same manner as that on the east, and a number of cows for family use are kept here. . . .
>
> These buildings have never been finished; the ceiling of the colonnades is lathed but not plastered; and it was intended to cover the whole exterior with hard stucco in imitation of stone. The appearance is certainly not in conformity with the style of the house, and is such as no gentleman of moderate property would permit at his own residence.
>
> I also examined the unsightly sheds built against the enclosing wall near the Treasury office. I find that there are twelve of them, and that they have been put up, by indulgence, by those clerks in that and the State Department who reside at a distance, for the purpose of sheltering their horses.
>
> Convenient accommodations may be had for the hay and straw by raising a part of each wing used for stables one story higher, as is shown in a pencil sketch on the drawing; and this might be done, and the repair of the wings, for $2,000.

On January 24, 1829, James Hoban returned an estimate for completing the stable, "per plan and estimate annexed" for the sum of $8,023.15.

Mr. Van Rensselaer's report from the Committee on the Public Buildings noted the following concerning the stable:

> No other than a temporary provision (subject to considerable inconvenience) has ever been made for stabling at the President's house. A plan was submitted to the committee by Mr. Hoban for the erection of a permanent stable, on a scale conformed to the style of the building, at the extremity of one of the wings. But as this would require a corresponding building at the other end, and the existing inconveniences

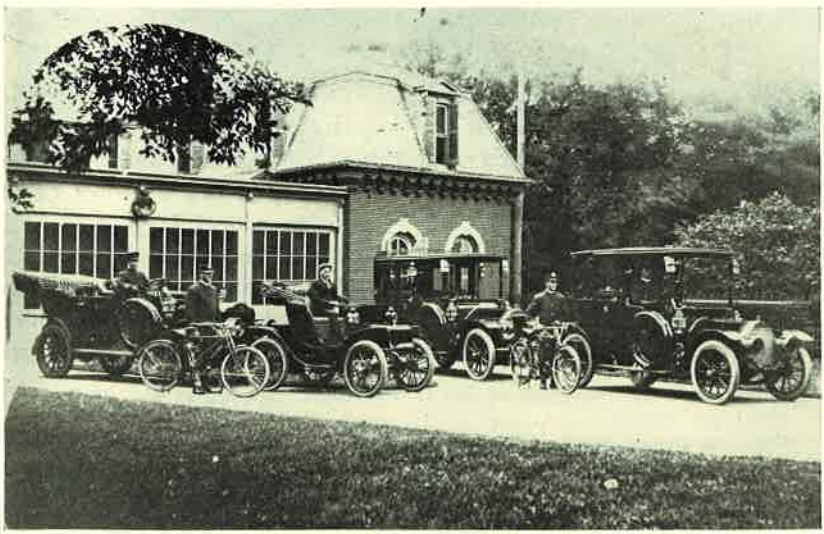
[10] Department of Interior, *Appropriation Ledger, Civil and Diplomatic,* Vol. 1, p. 358. The National Archives.

[11] Ibid. Receipted Bills 1819–1822. The National Archives.

Library of Congress

Harness Room in White House Stable during President Theodore Roosevelt's Administration

This photograph shows some of President Theodore Roosevelt's harness with his monogram and cockade. The harness is shown in a case, instead of a large harness room as was frequently found in up-to-date stables of the period.



Photograph Courtesy of George H. Robinson

White House Stable converted to Garage in 1909

This photograph shows the 1871 stable as it was converted to a garage in 1909. It was demolished in 1911. Shown in front is President Taft's official White House fleet. George H. Robinson who supplied the photograph is at the wheel of the White Steamer at the extreme left.

admitted of a simpler remedy, which the committee have preferred, they have not recommended that item in Mr. Hoban's estimates.[12]

It wasn't until President Jackson's second term that the old frame stable at the end of the east wing was removed and a stable—to accommodate ten horses—was erected a hundred yards east of the old site.[13] This met with favorable reception and the following article was published in the *National Intelligencer* regarding this change:

> Many important improvements have taken place at the President's House and the surrounding grounds. Until within the last year the colonnades, forming the East and West Terraces, were in a most dilapidated and disgusting condition; there were no proper stabling; no suitable supply of water, a mean, narrow contracted entrance at the north front, unworthy of so fine an ediface, without proper foot or carriage ways. . . .
>
> At the east of the President's House, about one hundred yards from the colonnade, is erected a fine stable, having a handsome picturesque appearance, calculated to accommodate about ten horses. The stable deserves particular notice, as I believe its construction to be much superior to any other that I have seen. Its plan exhibits two ranges of stalls facing each other, with a passage between; a granary and saddle room arranged in a convenient manner so that horses can be fed without entering the stalls. The floor is also ingeniously protected against rats; and there are other conveniences, which, to be properly appreciated, must be viewed.[14]

Appropriations Act of June 30, 1834, U.S. Statute 722, provided $6,670 for use "in alterations and repairs to the President's house, flooring the terraces and erecting stables." [15] Two separate warrants were filed by Commissioner Wm. Noland covering the cost of the building, the first filed July 30, 1834, and the second August 28, 1834. Of this amount, only $3,507.56 can be easily identified from the invoices as costs incurred with building the stable. A report by Messrs. Corbin and Sawyer, 1858–1870, lists the stables and conservatory as $4,905.[16] The stable was built of brick and stone and stuccoed on the

[12] Esther Singleton, *The Story of the White House*. New York: The McClure Co., 1907, Vol. 1, pp. 187–190.

[13] Wilhemus Bogart Bryan, *A History of the National Capital*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914, Vol. 2, p. 239. *United States Statutes at Large 18–23 Congresses 1824–1835*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1853, Vol. 4, p. 722. Warrant Division Secretary of the Treasury, *Treasury Appropriation Ledger No. 12*—Jan. 1, 1834–Dec. 31, 1834, p. 430.

[14] *National Intelligencer* (Washington) November 18, 1834, p. 2, cols. 1 & 2.

[15] Treasury Department, Auditor's Report No. 66377, dated 14 November 1834 and No. 66606, dated 24 December 1934. The National Archives.

[16] Esther Singleton, *The Story of The White House*. New York: The McClure Co., 1907, Vol. 2, p. 136.

Library of Congress

Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt's favorite mare

This mare was one of the last inhabitant's of the White House stable, built in 1871, before the stable was converted into a garage.

outside, plastered and whitewashed on the inside. The window frames and doors were painted. The expenses as reported in the warrants, were as follows:

To Edmund Hanley for whitewashing, plastering, & stocco-ing	$ 125.00
To Charles Sengstack for painting	68.96
To Robert Mills for measuring brickwork	8.26
To Robert Brown for brick, stone and cutting stone	114.15
To Bryan & Wood for lumber and carpenter's work	2200.00
To Ingle, Lindsley & Ingle for articles of hardware	165.31
To C. L. Coltman for brickwork on stable & dairy	825.88½
Total	$3507.56½

By 1856, much public sentiment was again being aroused concerning the White House stable. One writer described the situation thus:

> The immediate grounds at either end of the Executive Mansion are occupied as gardens and hot-houses, and with a mure or stable which stands a little in advance of the White House, in juxtaposition with the State and Treasury Departments. However some very plain democrat may rail against the extravagence in the appropriations for, and the magnificence of style of, our public buildings, he would never complain of the splendid stable appropriated to the President. Suffice it to say, that no respectable drayman in New York with three horses, would have so mean and illy constructed a building—and its location is an outrage upon decency.[17]

In 1857, the stable and conservatory east of the White House were removed to make room for the extension of the Treasury Building and a new stable and conservatory were erected at the President's House under the direction of Commissioner John B. Blake and architect Edward Clark.[18] The appropriation ledger of the Department of Interior shows that Commissioner Blake was paid $23,905 during the period July 29, 1857 to August 3, 1858. Only $20,000 had been appropriated, but the required $3,905 more was appropriated. Blake later (1864) claimed that only $8,448 of the $23,905 shown in the ledger was used in constructing the stable.[19]

On a cold winter night (February 10, 1864), during the administra-

[17] *The United States Magazine.* New York: J. M. Emerson & Co., 1856, Vol. 3, No. 3, September 1856.

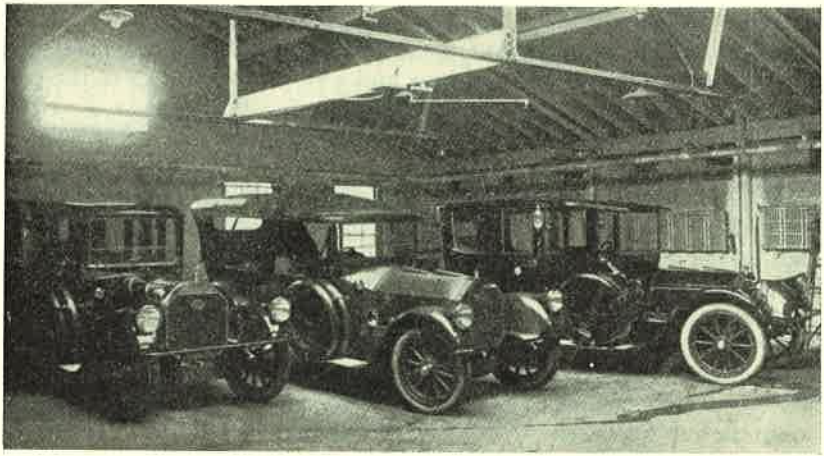
[18] Gilson Willets, *Inside History of the White House.* New York: The Christian Herald, 1908, p. 39.

[19] Office of Secretary of Interior Patents and Misc. Division, Record Group 48, "The President's Stable, Rebuilding," Box 58. The National Archives.

Photograph from Motor Magazine

The President's Garage in 1916

This photograph of the President's Garage, on Nineteenth Street, N. W. below Virginia Avenue, was published in Motor Magazine, October 1916, with the caption: "The president's garage, a portion of the depot quartermaster's stables, a makeshift structure in an out-of-the-way section of Washington."



Photograph from Motor Magazine

Interior of the President's Garage in 1916

This photograph was published in Motor Magazine, October 1916, with the caption: "Interior of the White House garage, showing the President's three private cars."

tion of President Lincoln, the White House stable caught fire and burned to the ground, leaving the White House itself unharmed. The brick stable was located between the Executive Mansion and the Treasury Department. Upon discovering the fire, President Lincoln jumped over the boxwood hedge and threw open the stable doors, but the fire had gone too far. Two ponies perished in the fire. One had belonged to the President's deceased son, little Willie Lincoln, and the other was Tad's. The destruction of the pony, which Willie had so dearly loved, deeply affected the President.[20]

The day following the burning, the coachman, Patterson McGee, was dismissed from the staff and arrested on the charge of setting the fire. A few days later Congress appropriated $12,000 to rebuild the stable.[21]

The job of rebuilding the stable fell to the Commissioner of Public Buildings, Benjamin B. French. A study of the issue reveals political resentment and departmental controversies. In a letter to Secretary of the Interior, J. P. Usher, Commissioner French outlined his plan as follows:

> The President's stable was in ruins, & there was, and is, no convenient place to keep horses, carriages or horse feed on the premises. I consulted with the President and he expressed a desire that an appropriation should be obtained and the stable rebuilt as soon as possible. I took with me a competent architect and a master bricklayer to the ruins, and asked them to give me an estimate of what the expense of rebuilding the building properly would be. They fixed the sum at $12,000, the original building having cost by *contract $17,000 ten years ago*. . . .
>
> I called immediately on the President, & took his opinion as to the location of the stable, & he strongly urged economy and despatch, & desired me to see Mrs. Lincoln & consult her convenience, I did so—the location was chosen, and I set men at once at work to clear away the rubbish, clean the brick, dig out the new foundation, & go on as fast as possible with the work. I received all sorts of advice—indeed all sorts of contrivances to get some of that $12,000 into pockets of people who could not aid me to the amount of a picayune. I had determined to do the job well & show the Government how small a sum would produce a good & handsome, and convenient stable.[22]

The next day French received a rebuttal to his statement regarding

[20] Gilson Willets, *Inside History of the White House*. New York: The Christian Herald, 1908, p. 225.

[21] Lincoln Sequicentennial Commission, *Lincoln Day by Day*, Washington, 1960, Vol. 3, p. 239.

[22] Office of Secretary of Interior Patents and Misc. Division, Record Group 48, "The President's Stable, Rebuilding," Box 58. The National Archives.

the amount spent by Commissioner Blake in 1857 for rebuilding the President's stable and adjusting the amount to $8,448. French also discovered that the job had not been done by contract as he had been led to believe. This further substantiated French's justification for not using the contract system as required by law. French claimed that the contract system required plans, specifications, advertising, proposals, examinations, contracts, bonds, etc., all of which would cause unnecessary delay and fill the pockets of contractors, who French said were constantly trying to cheat the United States Government. French convinced the officials that by doing the job himself and using Government carpenters under his direct supervision, he could rebuild the stable at a cost not over $7,000 and probably not much in excess of $6,000, thus saving the Government some $5,000. As added justification for eliminating a contractor, French states: "But even without that, there was the stable, a pile of ruins, all the coaches and carriages, out of doors; no place to keep horses or hay; & really, if that did not present a proper exigency, then am I at a loss to define what that word means." [23]

Secretary of Interior Usher questioned Commissioner French's idea of not using the contract system and also his idea of saving the Government money, to which French took issue. Correspondence replete with resentment was exchanged between the two. French informed Usher that he had constantly humiliated him ever since French had been appointed Commissioner. He further felt that the Commissioner should not be under the aegis of the Secretary of Interior at all.

To begin with Commissioner French took Mr. Isiah Rogers, the Architect of the Treasury Department, with him on February 11, the day after the burning, to examine the remains and give him an estimate on the rebuilding. It was this estimate of $12,000 which Congress acted upon when they appropriated the money on February 13. There is no reason why he asked Rogers instead of the Architect of the Capitol. He did justify his actions for not having elaborate architectural plans in a letter in which he stated:

> As we all knew well, the plan of the old stable, & do not intend to change it materially it seems hardly necessary to go to the expense of an elegant architectural plan. Our intention has been to comply literally with the request of the President, who said to me that he wanted a substantial, convenient, well built stable, with no money thrown away in ornamentation or extravagence.

[23] Ibid.

To further aggravate the situation a certain Mr. Samuel T. G. Morsell was appointed General Superintendent for the work on the President's stables on May 2, 1864. Although his salary was only $4.00 a day, French at once pounced upon the idea of displacing him. In a letter to Usher, French informed him that he had discovered that Morsell was unfriendly to the present administration and was too outspoken in his views—Morsell did not think Lincoln stood a chance of being renominated at the Baltimore Convention. The pressure became more than Morsell chose to bear, and he offered his resignation on May 7. On May 9, Secretary Usher replied to Morsell, saying he did not believe the charges and did not doubt his sincerity. This pleased Morsell, and he replied in a May 11 letter to Usher that he would continue until another person was appointed in his stead.

In the meantime, the work continued on the President's new stable with Thos. U. Walter, Esq., the Architect of the Capitol, serving as architectural adviser, and R. H. Stewart, General Superintendent until replaced by Morsell. By March 12, progress was well underway on the stables, and the following report was issued by French:

> Now, all the old rubbish has been removed, the bricks cleaned & sorted, all the tin that can again be used carefully taken from the ruins, rolled up and made ready to use again. The place for the foundation is excavated, the window frames, & other wood work are in a state of great forwardness & should the weather be propitious, a single month will very nearly serve to complete the building.[24]

Superintendent Stewart reported the following expenditures as of March 11, 1864:

Lumber	1,500
Carpenter's work	2,000
Brick & Brick work	3,000
Tin work	300
Digging out old foundation	160
Cart hire	30
	$6,990

Already French had spent the maximum amount which he had said that it would cost and the stables were far from complete. The following breakdown was presented to Usher by French on March 22:

[24] Ibid.

20,000 new brick purchased of Mr. John Webster @ 20 dollars per thousand	$ 400.00
15,000 feet of lumber (white pine joists girders etc.) @ 3¢ per foot	450.00
75 barrels of lime purchased of Nicholas Acker at 150¢ per bbl.	112.50
100 loads of sand purchased of E. Childress @ $1 per load	100.00
2 carts, horses & drivers 35 days of S. Cook @ $1.25 each per day	87.50
251½ days work of laborers @ $1.50 per day each	377.25
	$1,527.25

To complete the job it would take the following:

120,000 bricks to complete the building	
100,000 will be saved from the old ruins—	
It will cost $6 per thousand to lay these bricks	$ 720.00
It will require 16000 feet more of lumber @ 3 cents per foot	480.00
The tin roof, in addition to the old tin saved	450.00
Hardware such as nails, spikes, hinges, door fastenings, horse crib fixtures etc. will cost	150.00
Painting, at the lowest calculation	150.00
	$3,477.25

To this must be added all the carpenter work, superintendent and incidentals that cannot be estimated.[25]

By April 22, 1864, Architect Walter estimated that the stable and coach house on the President's grounds would amount to $10,446, the work accomplished up to this point being as follows:

> The ruins of the old building have been taken down, the bricks cleaned, and the rubbish removed; the foundations of the new building have been laid, the first story of the walls erected, and the workmen are now engaged in putting on the main floor joists.[26]

Meanwhile, on April 5, French had written to Usher saying that he thought the cost of the stable would "reach nearly, if not quite the amount appropriated viz $12,000." Approximately $3,000 was being saved by using the brick and tin from the burned stable. Thus ends the long struggle for the rebuilding of the President's stable in a manner intended to save money for the Government. Messrs Corbin and Sawyer's report 1858–1870 lists the total costs of the stables as high as $14,016.19. On August 16, 1866, French was paid an addi-

[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

tional $1,500 for making a road from the President's House to the Stable.[27]

It was not until President Grant's first administration that the new stable was completely screened from public view.[28] An engraving of this stable appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, April 17, 1869. This stable—on the site designated in 1871 for the Executive Office Building—did not serve the Executive Mansion long before it was torn down. A photograph dated July 10, 1871, shows the demolition of the stable. A new stable was built under the direction of architect Alfred B. Mullett, whose first progress report to Fish on January 9, 1872, contained the following:

> Upon locating the building it was found that the stable of the Executive Mansion formed a part of the site designated by the act approved March 3, 1871.... It was therefore removed to a point convenient to the Executive Mansion and unobjectionable to the Departments or the owners of the surrounding property. In rebuilding..., I have errected a stable... in keeping with the surroundings and permanent and substantial in character. The total cost... is $27,025.15 which is strictly chargeable... as a contingent expense... having been rendered necessary by the location of the new department building.[29]

That the building was permanent and substantial in character, there is no question. It was situated on the White lot located nearly opposite the Corcoran Gallery of Art on a line with E street, and remained there until it was finally demolished in 1911. The stable was established in a two-story mansard-roofed building having a frame-and-glass enclosed court. Partly concealed in a grove, the stable gave a rich bucolic air to the neighborhood, but nevertheless was an improvement over previous sites and buildings. During the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, the stable was almost entirely rebuilt, the changes including the erection of a small frame cottage and workshop in the rear for the use of employees.[30]

It was President Taft who turned the White House stable into a garage, ordering a White Steamer, two Pierce-Arrows, and a Baker Electric.

By 1911, all the horses, carriages—two remaining at the White

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[27] Department of Interior, *Appropriation Ledger, Civil and Diplomatic*, Vol. 4, p. 374. The National Archives.

[28] Edna M. Colman, *Seventy-Five Years of White House Gossip*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1926, pp. 61–62.

[29] *Executive Office Building* (General Services Administration Historical Study No. 3), Washington, D. C., December 1964, pp. 33, 44, 45.

[30] *The Evening Star* (Washington), July 10, 1911.

House—and automobiles were transferred to new quarters, a large brick building occupying most of the square between 19th and 20th, and B and C Streets, N. W. A new brick garage—constructed by DuPont Storage Company and located on 19th Street between the two wings of the original stable building—was provided for the executive equipage. These buildings were maintained by the Quartermaster General of the Army. Even the White House cow, "Pauline," purchased by Mrs. Taft, was moved to these new quarters. Describing the incident in 1911, the *Evening Star* gives the following account:

> Although Pauline has lost her home on the White Lot, she will continue to enjoy the daily privilege of grazing on those exclusive preserves. She is led there in a dewy morning and taken away in the twilight to spend her nights among the jumpers, chargers and draught horses of the military establishment in the less aristocratic neighborhood of 19th and B streets.[31]

Arrangements were then made with Captain U. S. Grant, 3rd, engineer officer temporarily in charge of public buildings and grounds, to tear down the stable earlier used by his grandfather. The order provided for the removal of the stables—the only buildings on the large reservation south of the President's House and the State and Treasury buildings, between 15th and 17th Streets—from the public reservation. Surrounded by a grove of small but heavily foliaged trees and thick shrubbery, the stable was somewhat concealed from the general public. The order further provided for the grading, soiling, seeding and sodding of the site. Sealed bids were opened for the removal of the President's stable and the frame structure in the rear thereof, located opposite 17th and E Streets, N. W. Demolishing work was to commence by July 1, 1911. The following material was retained from the White House stable for the new place:

> All switches, panel boards, rheostats, etc. of the charging apparatus, all harness closets and lockers, oil tanks, pump, and gasoline tanks, iron work of stall partitions and 2 watering troughs.

These objects were saved and used at the new garage adjacent to the Quartermaster stable at 19th and C Streets, N.W.

The bids were taken in two classes as follows:

Class I

Tearing down and removing all materials in the superstructure of the President's stable.

[31] Ibid.

Taking out and removing the materials in the foundations to a grade two feet below the present ground level.

Taking down and removing the iron fence and granite gate posts at the west entrance to the stable at same grade.

Taking up and removing the sheet asphalt in front, the asphalt blocks in the rear, and the cement water table on the north side of the building.

Tearing down and removing the two frame sheds back of the main building.

Class II

Moving, without tearing down, the two-story frame stable in the rear to a designated site in the propagating gardens at 15th and C streets, southwest.

All the materials in the first class will become the property of the contractor.

All debris resulting from the taking down of the stable shall be removed and the grounds left in a perfectly clean condition.

In moving the frame stable the following routes shall be taken:

Move the stable out to 17th street, thence south on 17th street to the tidal basin thence southwest on the roadway northeast of tidal basin to a point south of the propagating gardens, thence north into the gardens, to the designated point near the south curb line of C street extended. The approximate distance is one mile.

The frame stable is an old building and due precaution shall be exercised in moving it so as not to rack it unnecessarily. Any damage done must be repaired by the contractor at his own expense. Bids will be received separately for each class. The right is reserved to reject any or all proposals. Award of each class may be made separately, or of both together, as may be most advantageous to the United States.

An alternate bid on Class II for tearing down the frame stable in the rear of the President's stable, in place of moving the stable, will be considered. All the materials to become the property of the contractor.

Work under Class I shall commence within one week after the contract is signed and be completed within three weeks from that date sent. Work under Class II shall commence with five days after the other stable has been taken down and the materials hauled away, and be completed within ten working days of suitable weather from that date.[32]

Bidders were L. M. Johnston of Arlington, Va; Wm Gifford, Wash-

[32] Record Group 42, "The White House Stables 116 (1 to 100)." The National Archives.

ington, D. C.; T. Edward Clark, Washington, D. C.; Littlefield, Alvord and Company; Wilbur F. Nash, Washington, D. C. and Martin McNamara, Washington, D. C. The job of tearing down and removing the President's stable for $59 was given to T. Edward Clark, 1305 N.J. Ave., N. W. Acceptance was sent to Wilbur F. Nash, 122 M. Street, N. W. for his bid to move the frame stable in the rear of the President's stable at 17th Street opposite E Street to the Propagating Gardens on the Monument Grounds at a cost of $300.00.

A writer in 1916, described the new quarters in the following manner:

> The stable and dispensary of the depot quartermaster of the War Department, the central portion of which forms the White House garage, is situated on Nineteenth street, below Virginia avenue, a section so remote and off the beaten path that even the sight-seeing automobiles never pass it. Even if they did, the passengers would see nothing but a two-storied brick building, unadorned with any crest or motto to indicate that it is there that the chief executive garages his four private cars, Secretary Tumulty's machine, the big touring car in which the Secret Service guard travels and the three small delivery cars attached to the White House. Across the street is the vacant lot used for the workouts of the horses in the War Department stable and below, one catches a glimpse of the tennis courts in Potomac park. No car line passes within six blocks of the place, and this may account in some manner for the deserted appearance of this section of the capital city.
>
> The 'president's garage,' so called for want of a better title, is little more than four brick walls with a roof and cement flooring. Few luxuries are to be found there, and the structure serves merely as a place to keep the cars when they are not in use. The machines are overhauled and kept in order by a small force of men, for the most part employees of the War Department, under the direction of F. H. Robinson . . .[33]

The garage remained at the site on 19th Street below Virginia Avenue until about two years ago when it was relocated in its present building at 1222 22nd Street, N. W. next to the Capitol Cadillac Building.

[33] Alan James, "The President's Garage", in *Motor,* Vol. 27, October 1916, pp. 70–71.